

California Moves from 19th to 9th in the Annual Bicycle-Friendly State Survey

California moved up from 19th to 9th in the nation in the *League of American Bicyclists'* annual bicycle-friendly survey. How did we accomplish this great achievement? To begin with, in fall 2013, Governor Jerry Brown Jr. signed legislation (Senate Bill 99) creating the *Active Transportation Program*. This law combined several nonmotorized programs into one bicycle and pedestrian fund that provides about \$125 million per year in federal and state funding for bicycle and pedestrian projects.

Caltrans is conducting a \$360 million call for projects under the Active Transportation Program for program years 2014–15 and 2015–16. We have received 770 program applications, seeking more than \$1 billion for bicycle and pedestrian projects throughout the state. Other changes that influenced our rating in the League's survey were the statewide enactment of the Complete Streets Program and passage of California's Three Feet for Safety Act (*Assembly Bill 1371*). This law requires vehicles passing a bicycle to maintain a three-foot buffer for safe passage.

Passage of the Active Transportation Program and the subsequent call for projects has raised the profile of nonmotorized transportation in California like never before. Caltrans' new mission to "provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability," reinforces the importance of bicycle and pedestrian transportation as part of the overall transportation system. Investments in bicycle and pedestrian facilities increase system efficiencies while lowering greenhouse gas emissions, as required under *Assembly Bill 32* and *Senate Bill 375*.

For California to continue improving its bicycle-friendly rating, some areas require improvement. We need to conduct bicycle counts, collect bicycle crash data, and develop performance measures for bicycle facilities. While this is an emerging subject nationally, it is important that Caltrans assume the same leadership role with bicycle data as it has with other transportation data and information.



To view Caltrans Director Malcolm Dougherty's video, scan the QR code or see the Mile Marker online at www.dot.ca.gov.

Effective data collection will lead to better planning and integrating bicycle and pedestrian facilities into the transportation system.

Other League-recommended improvements for California include:

- Adopting a state bicycle plan.
- Adopting a state policy requiring bicycle parking at all state buildings, parks, and facilities.
- Adopting a vulnerable road-users law that increases penalties for motorists who injure or kill a bicyclist or pedestrian.
- Adopting a mode-share goal for biking that encourages integrating bicycle transportation needs.

California residents are changing how they travel, with more people choosing active transportation over driving. We still have work to do, but by working with our local and regional partners, we will continue to advance toward a sustainable transportation system for everyone.

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